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TO ALL MEMBERS

During the latter part of 1982 and the beginning of 1983 you may have experienced a lack of communication from the Secretary's office, in that any letters you may have written to us have remained unanswered and you have also not received the January/February *Bulletin*.

The reason for this apparent neglect is that we have had a crisis in the Executive Committee. Due to resignations, ill-health, personal problems and other factors, the Secretary and Treasurer have fallen behind considerably in their work.

To rectify this situation the Executive Committee at its meeting in mid-February took certain important decisions to put the affairs of the Society on a sound working basis again. These measures are now being implemented.

If you have paid your subscription or written us a letter to which you have had no response, please write to us again.

The January/February issue of the *Bulletin* is replaced by this January - April issue, but future issues will continue to appear bi-monthly as before.

Please accept our sincere apologies for any inconvenience caused to you.

Yours sincerely,

John Karmali

John Karmali
CHAIRMAN

CONTENTS

Why doesn't the Yelloe-breasted Apalis duet at Kenyatta University College? 2
Botanical notes en route to Mombasa 4
A common and commonly mistaken Nairobi Garden plant 5
The biomass of the larger mammals of Lake Nakuru National Park 5
Rescue operation 7
Hand-rearing common Nairobi garden birds 8
Bird bath surprises 9
A rare Chamaeleon? 11
Verreaux's Eagles 11
Hammerkops 11
Letters to the Editor.. 12
Review *Run Rhino Run* 13
R.H. Carcasson - An Appreciation 13
Notice 14
A walking safari along the Tsavo River 15
Informal outing to the top of the Mua Hills 18
Request 19
Notice 20
Wanted 20
For Sale 20
Society Functions 21
To all Members 22

WHY DOESN'T THE YELLOW-BREASTED APALIS DUET AT KENYATTA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE?

A pair of Yellow-breasted Apalises *Apalis flavida flavocincta* occupy a territory that consists at least in part of my garden in Spring Valley, Nairobi, and they are frequently heard duetting, i.e calling together in a semi-routine manner. The male of the pair has a large oval black spot on his breast (Jackson 1938; National Museum specimens), and his call consists of a rhythmic clicking that can be reasonably well mimicked in both tone and rhythm by the drumming of the nails of the first three fingers on a table top, as if in irritation, impatience or ennui; this call has the rhythm of the gallop of a horse, and thus is often called 'galloping'. The female, on the other hand, has a much smaller, circular black breast spot (Jackson & National Museum collection *op. cit.*) and, while the male is 'galloping', she chimes in with one or more crescendoes of shrill, excited, even hysterical squeaks that have accurately been likened to 'laughing' (Y. Malcolm-Coe pers. comm.). The volume of these bursts of 'laughing' can undergo several rising and falling cycles while the male is calling, but it is very unusual for the female to call alone or to initiate the duet.

Having these birds frequently calling in the garden, I have become 'tuned in' to them, such that I can frequently detect their calls even through screens of such extraneous noises as dogs barking, babies screaming or acquaintances attempting conversation. This has tended to result in an increasing notoriety for being absent-minded and, on occasions blatantly impudent, but I have managed over a period of more than a year to study both the birds' calls and their behaviour while calling, and the results are compiled in an article in the journal *Scopus* (1982).

There is no point in reiterating the whole content of the article here, but the following points, together with some new data from Kenyatta University College (KUC) and from Ishiara, may be of interest.

In the temperate latitudes of the world, e.g. Europe, North America etc., birds breed in the summer to take advantage of the more abundant food supplies and more clement weather, and their reproductive systems are activated by such factors as the increasing number of daylight hours as winter gives way to spring. Thus they always tend to breed at the same time of year, and substantial and regular external stimuli tell them when this period is approaching, so that they can be ready to breed as soon as the optimum conditions of climate and food abundance occur.

But, for birds breeding in Nairobi or indeed anywhere within the tropics, things are more difficult since the number of daylight hours is more or less constant throughout the year, and there are no temperature variations as dramatic as those regularly occurring between, for example, the European seasons. Furthermore, and making the situation still more complex, the abundance of many types of avian food in the tropics is closely controlled by the rains so that tropical birds, especially passerines, tend to breed during the wet seasons to take advantage of the increased abundance of food to feed their young (Brown & Britton 1980).

Since tropical rainfall can be erratic in occurrence and/or short-lived, birds like the apalises cannot afford to waste optimum breeding time *during* the rains by searching for a mate and stimulating their sexual physiology *after* the rains have started. As only one of its several apparent functions (see references in the *Scopus* article), the apalis' duetting is thought to at least partially remedy the situation:-

1) by reinforcing the birds' pair bond during the dry non-breeding season(s), so that they are still paired whenever the next wet season makes breeding more viable;

2) by keeping the reproductive physiology of the pair in phase or harmony with each other, so that *both* members of the pair can be ready to breed at the *same* time; and

3) by keeping the birds' physiology attuned to the climate, so that they can anticipate the rains and start to breed as soon as they arrive.

In addition to these reproductive functions, the apalis' duetting is also thought to aid in the defence of the pairs' territory, and to keep them in contact from moment to moment as they forage for food amongst thick vegetation e.g. the dense shrubs and tree canopies of my garden.

With the exception of quite brief and apparently selected periods of the year, the Spring Valley apalises are duetting quite frequently each day, so that it came as some surprise when Derek Pomeroy mentioned that the Yellow-breasted Apalises that are resident around his house on the campus of KUC *do not* duet much at all. Of course I did not believe him but, subsequent to many visits, I have been proved quite wrong. At KUC, about 20 km northeast of Spring Valley, the male apalis 'gallops' quite regularly, but the duet is rarely given (and before you expostulate: the male at KUC is *not* solitary; a pair *is* present and they *do* breed).

So why the difference? I can give no more than tentative ideas. Starting at Muthaiga and moving north-eastwards through KUC and towards Thika, the climate is decidedly drier than in Spring Valley, and at KUC such common Nairobi garden birds as the Northern Olive Thrush *Turdus abyssinicus*, the Tropical Boubou *Laniarius ferrugineus* and the chinspot Batis *Batis molitor* are absent or very rare (D.E. Pomeroy pers. comm.). Thus KUC is decidedly less lush than many Nairobi gardens, though I must say that there are still some large thickly foliaged trees etc., particularly around the staff housing. Could it thus be that, due to the more open habitat, the apalises do not need to duet in order to stay in moment to moment contact with each other?

I honestly do not know but, looking again at the proposed functions of duetting that I have given, there does not seem to be too much left with which to play around. Unless, of course, the KUC apalises differ from those at Spring Valley by being an isolated pair, not surrounded by potentially intrusive neighbouring pairs and thus not being forced to duet to preserve their terrotorial integrity. With the irregularity of rainfall applying equally or even more so to the drier KUC area, I cannot see that the proposed reproductive functions of duetting are going to be any less essential than in the wetter Spring Valley area, in fact quite the reverse.

On a trip to Ishiara, east of Embu, on 28 August 1982, the KUC phenomenon was repeated. Here, however, is a different situation. The Ishiara area is considerably drier than KUC, with much 'hard' dry bush, and the Yellow-breasted Apalises are of the 'lower and drier' type that have the black breast markings severely reduced or absent. I saw lots of individual apalises and heard numerous male 'gallops', but not a single call was detected, despite careful listening for it. It could be argued that, since none of the other birds in the area were showing any signs of breeding activity, my visit being during a very dry and thus food-poor period, there would be no need for the apalises to duet; but this would not be true *if* the duetting *is* used throughout the year to hold the pair together. .

The Ishiara habitat is more open than lush Nairobi gardens, so again perhaps the birds can see each other more easily and thus do not need to duet to maintain contact: I dont know. However, the argument suggesting that the absence of neighbouring pairs alleviates the need to duet for territorial defence could not apply at Ishiara where many individuals were seen in a relatively small area unless, in the dry season in such 'hard' habitats, the apalises give up their breeding territories and forage more widely for food.

The only point that does seem certain is that there is a significant behavioural distinction (a) between the apalises with large breast spots at Spring Valley and KUC; and (b) between Spring Valley birds and those of the small- or non-spotted type at Ishiara.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

I am very grateful to G.R. Cunningham-van Someren for access to reference texts and the specimen collection at the National Museum, Nairobi.

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Adrian D. Lewis, Geology, Box 30197, NAIROBI.

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BOTANICAL NOTES EN ROUTE TO MOMBASA

Like many others at this time, early in the New Year and soon after the short rains, we had a brief holiday in Mombasa and travelled by road from Nairobi. One could not fail to be impressed by the green countryside all the way and carpets of flowers in some areas looked delightful. Eventually we stopped, just beyond Mtito Andei and before Kyulu to have a closer look and take some photographs of the flower blooms. Using Michael Blundell's new book *The Wild Flowers of Kenya* we were able to identify a few plants in the profusion available.

Two white herbs straggled along the ground by the verges. One was *Heliotropium* sp. with its distinctive bifurcated flower head, a common plant in disturbed soil. The other plant was more intriguing and appeared to have dropped its 3 cm long creamy-white trumpets of carollas in untidy heaps beside each plant. This sweet smelling flower was also scrambling high over bushes further back from the road. *Thunbergia guerkeana* apparently flowers at night, hence the pile of discarded corollas in the morning. Its star-like calyx has 10 - 12 spider-like segments supported by two large bracts.

Growing in extensive patches, about 50 cm high, behind the road verges were delicate pink *Cleome allamani*. The plant is sticky due to glandular hairs. Two of the four petals have characteristic yellow diamond patches, with protruding delicate stamens about 3 cm long, this plant looked most attractive in the morning sunlight.

A purple bush up to 1.5 m high became dominant as we proceeded through the Tsavo area. The small purple flower hung out of a puffy, downy calyx about 1 cm long. The plant looked a typical Labiate and we concluded that it was *Erythrochlamys spectabilis*. As we examined the bush we glimpsed the bright blue flower of *Blepharis linariifolia* at our feet. We saw the rosette like patterns of sinuate leaves and felt the spine-toothed prickly bracts. The dry, pale purple-blue flowers of the pea-like *Vigna vexillata* were also seen.

On the return journey we stopped and collected a few plants just beyond Ndi and before the sign for Mbelola Station. These were later identified back in Nairobi. A very hairy plant with rather lupin-like purple flowers was *Tephrosia villosa* the standard petal was indeed "densely fulvous-tomentose" (Agnew 1974) i.e. it had a reddish padding of woolly hairs. The *Cleome* and

Blepharis were also there as well as *Pentanisia ouranogyne* with its heads of bright blue star-likr flowers, quite low in the herb layer. A shrubby, aromatic herb with pale purple spikes of flowers was *Ocimum hadiense*, the pale purple hairs on the flower stalks and calyx added more colour to the plant. Striking a different note was a simple spike of white flowers among the purples and blues. It was *Chascanum hildebrandti*, the plant had a woody rootstock and rather unusual small, elongate fruits pressed parallel along the stem.

I hope this short account of ten species may be of interest to other travellers along the Mombasa road after the short rains. No doubt many others could be added. The plants, incidentally, kept very well in our picnic tupperware!

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A.E. Birnie, Box 30158, NAIROBI.

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A COMMON AND COMMONLY MISTAKEN NAIROBI GARDEN PLANT

Everyone in Nairobi who takes an interest in plants must be familiar with a bushy yellow flowered composite with dissected alternate leaves which in the greener parts of our city is often grown in grass road verges. This is sometimes known as 'the bushy yellow *Chrysanthemum*' it is however *Gamolepis chrysanthemoides* DC.

Gamolepis is a South African genus belonging to the tribe *Calendulae*. Its most obvious difference from *Chrysanthemum* is the bracts of its inflorescence arranged in a single row whereas in *Chrysanthemum* they are spirally arranged. It is odd that *Gamolepis* is not mentioned in Jex Blake *Gardening in East Africa*. I suspect that it may have been confused with *Chrysanthemum frutescens chrysaster*.

J.B.G. E.A. Herbarium.

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THE BIOMASS OF THE LARGER MAMMALS OF LAKE NAKURU NATIONAL PARK

During 1978 and 1979 ten game counts were run in Lake Nakuru National Park. The method and the results of the first three counts are described in a previous report (*EANHS Bulletin* 1978: 108-109).

Computer analysis of all the data has now yielded interesting results on the typical group sizes of the different antelope species. Species which feed on grass are found in larger groups than species which feed by browsing on soft plant parts; species which live in open habitat (open shrub, open grassland) are found in larger groups than species which live in dense habitat (dense shrub and forest).

A second aspect which can be calculated from the game count data is the biomass (i.e. the combined weight of all animals) of the larger mammals in Lake Nakuru Park. The average number of each of the species seen during the ten game counts is given in the first column of Table 1. During some of the counts the distance was estimated between the animals seen and the observer. An average sighting distance of 86 m multiplied by the length of the counting line (113.5 km) gives a counting area of approximately 24 km². The second

column shows the average number of each species seen per km² of the counting area. As the counting was done from the existing roads and as these roads lead through areas of particularly high density of game (i.e. along rivers and lakeshores), the result is not representative for the whole park area. The density of animals in the uncensused areas is probably somewhat lower. The third column of the table gives the average weight of each species. The fourth column gives the biomass per km², i.e. the value of the second column multiplied by those of the third column. This is called the biomass density. Summing up these values we arrive at a biomass of 13 523 kg of larger mammals per km² counting area. 13 459 kg/km² (i.e. 90%) are large plant eating species (herbivores). With 70% of the total, waterbuck provide the bulk of the biomass.

How does this compare with other areas? Table 2 compares the biomass density of herbivores in Lake Nakuru National Park with that of other African National Parks. Lake Nakuru National Park has one of the highest biomass densities measured so far.

TABLE 1

Numbers and biomass of large mammals in Lake Nakuru National Park

Species	Average number per count	Average number per km²	Average weight (kg)	Biomass per km²
Waterbuck	1427	59.43	160	9508.8
Impala	854	35.57	40	1422.8
Thomson's Gazelle	238	9.91	15	148.6
Bohor Reedbuck	54	2.25	40	90
Bushbuck	9	0.37	30	11.1
Kirk's Dikdik	5	0.21	3.5	0.7
Steinbok	3	0.13	9	1.2
Mountain Reedbuck	3	0.13	40	5.2
Grant's Gazelle	9	0.37	40	14.8
Klipspringer	1	0.04	12	0.5
Eland	1	0.04	340	13.6
Buffalo	80	3.33	450	1498.5
Hippo	2	0.08	1000	80
Warthog	24	1.00	45	45
Bushpig	1	0.04	54	2.2
Giraffe	17	0.71	750	532.5
Zebra	10	0.42	200	84
Jackal	11	0.46	8	3.7
Leopard	1	0.04	54	2.2
Rock Hyrax	14	0.58	2.5	1.4
Baboon	72	3.00	17	51
Vervet Monkey	17	0.71	4	2.8
Colobus Monkey	5	0.21	10	2.1
				13523

TABLE 2

Biomass density of large herbivores in African National Parks (kg/km²)

Rwenzori N.P., Uganda	19 928
Manyara N.P., Tanzania	19 189
Lake Nakuru N.P., Kenya	13 459
Serengeti N.P., Tanzania	8 352
Ngorongoro Crater, Tanzania	7 561
Amboseli Game Reserve, Kenya	4 848
Nairobi N.P., Kenya	4 324
Mfolosi Game Reserve, South Africa	4 385
Tsavo N.P. (East), Kenya	4 210
Saint-Floris N.P., Central African Republic	4 032
Bouba Ndjida N.P., Cameroon	2 321
Arli N.P., Upper Volta	1 831
Fina N.P., Mali	813

Dr Peter Wirtz, Zoologisches Institut, Albertstr.21a, D-7800, Freiburg, W-Germany.

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RESCUE OPERATION

The inert damp little nestling lay at the feet of the toothless black cat. My heart sank for where was the time to spare to feed a flycatcher? Effort had to be made, however; this was not only a helpless baby but the emerging pattern showed it to be a Chin-spot Batis *Batis molitor* and too many times this year on Crescent Island disaster has overtaken young in the nest.

The next half hour saw the youngster's cold little body cupped in the warmth of my hands while I pondered the next move. First, always try to find the parents or a nest and leave the nestling nearby. In most cases it will be found and looked after. If this fails only then take take the bird for hand rearing; so I had been instructed long ago.

I placed the bird, now warm, in a newspaper lined box and left it in the warmth of the verandah while I went on a search. There had to be nest somewhere and I could hear the three note call of adult birds about a hundred metres away.

A Batis nest is approximately 7 cm across, the outer layers are of lichen and a lichen-covered bough is chosen for its placement and this can be anything from two to fifteen metres above the ground. It is perhaps of no small wonder that I failed to find it among the abundance of acacias. Following the fast moving adult birds brought no reward either.

An hour later I returned to the little bird. Now was the time to try a technique which had been successful on many similar occasions. Emulating the parents' call I gave a gentle three note whistle. The effect was remarkable. The bird snapped into life and answered with a long series of little chirps.

After some conversation between us I was encouraged enough to try another move; not far away was an old Batis nest from which the young had been taken by a Tropical Boubou *Laniarius ferrugineus* earlier in the year. I took this nest, placed the little bird into it and perched it on a platform of indigenous orchids which were wired onto a pepper tree close to the window of the verandah from where I could watch events.

Within five minutes the excited chirps of the nestling had been heard by adults some distance away. In they came; after a short investigation of the site they commenced to feed the young. In my experience the male Batis does about five trips for food to the female's one and this was the case now. Almost like an automaton the male, every fifteen seconds, was back with food. It seemed a frenetic exercise. Spiders, caterpillars and various grubs were thrust down the ever-open throat of the little bird. Within half an hour the nestling had fattened to such an extent that it no longer fitted the nest. It scrambled out to the rim.

Feeding continued throughout the day. At 4 p.m. heavy rain fell and the nestling, now obviously much stronger, sought shelter under the stems of the orchids. Considering this inadequate, I cut two large agave leaves and placed these in a convenient crotch to act as a roof; the parents, undismayed, continued to feed the youngster until night fell when they went off to roost elsewhere.

The next morning I was up at dawn thinking to record at what time the parents would start feeding. Too late - they were already at it.

Reluctantly I had to forsake the scene for meetings in Nairobi and leave further observation to my servant who has, over the years, proved himself a good naturalist. On my return two days later I learned that the nestling had fluttered to the end of a branch in the same tree the day before and was still being fed by the parents - and that is how I found it. The following day away it went, but it returns from time to time showing us its ever-strengthening attractive black and white chin-spot pattern.

Jean Hayes, Crescent Island, Box 670, Naivasha.

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HAND-REARING COMMON NAIROBI GARDEN BIRDS

THE RED-EYED DOVE and allied species. These species being mainly seed-eaters, should be fed on millet and bread and milk.

For young nestlings, give a mixture of bread and milk with some crushed millet added to it. A small amount of baby food should be sprinkled on top, as this is necessary for extra vitamins (expired baby food is quite adequate).

As the bird grows older the diet should be largely supplemented with millet, crushed preferably, as this is more easily digested. Later on whole millet can be given, this can be done by dipping pieces of banana in millet, the millet adheres to the banana, and it can then be fed to the bird (a messy job).

This should be continued until the bird is able to eat by itself.

THE SPECKLED MOUSEBIRD is a common bird in most Nairobi gardens. It usually nests in Kei Apple hedges, and most nests are uncovered while these hedges are being trimmed.

As most gardeners know, Mousebirds are very partial to fruit. They should, therefore, be fed on a diet of mixed and pulped fruit. These can be bananas, pawpaws, tomatoes, grapes, mangoes etc. As mentioned above, infant-food should be sprinkled on to the pulped fruit, to top up the bird with the

with the necessary vitamins and minerals.

BARBETS can be fed on the above diet too, but it should be augmented with insects.

SHRIKES, FLYCATCHERS, HOOPOES, SWALLOWS, SWIFTS etc. which are highly insectivorous birds should be fed on insects. However, brightly coloured insects should be avoided as this is usually a danger sign, and the insect may well be poisonous. Therefore only feed these birds with grasshoppers, moths, butterflies and other drab coloured insects.
If, by any chance, insects are not available, a suitable substitute is boiled, finely minced lean meat mixed with hard-boiled egg; though insects are necessary for digestion.

WEAVERS, THRUSHES AND BULBULS can also be fed on the above diet, though they should also be given millet and bread.

There are various ways of feeding young birds, a syringe or eye-dropper can be used for soft mixtures. If force feeding is necessary then be careful when you put food into the mouth, as the tongue may be pressed against the upper mandible and could be damaged if the food were to be forced past it.

I hope these suggested diets and various ways of feeding nestlings and fledgelings will help members when they come across any young birds.

Pritpal Soorae, Box 44919, Nairobi.

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BIRD BATH SURPRISES

My first surprise was that, however small or large the garden, there can never be too many bird baths. one is certainly not enough. Though there are some avians, like humans, who enjoy the rush and tumble of public community bathing, there are others who require privacy. Some are happier with wide open bathing spaces with a bit of sun, and yet others prefer a quiet shady secluded bath. In my front garden (70 x 35 m) I have three bird baths which cater for most tastes among the visiting bathers.

My second surprise was how certain species of birds always prefer a particular bath, to the extent that they will politely, though sometimes noisily, wait in a nearby shrub until the bath is vacant. The white-eyed Slaty Flycatchers *Melaenornis chocolatina* and the Robin Chats *Cossypha caffra* have a particular preference for my quiet shady secluded bath, but then they are 'fitness freaks', taking several plunges in and out getting a fair shower going. The waxbills *Estrilda astrild*, Yellow-bellied Waxbills *E. melanotis* and Rufous-backed Mannikin *Ionchura bicolor nigriceps* are all 'wide open spaces, spit and polish','gossips as we go' merchants. Those of the more leisurely bathers generally post a guard near the bath and with a clever bit of teamwork, manage to hold the bath against all-comers until they have finished their ablutions. Then there are the shyer, politer, African Fire-finches *Lagonosticta rubricata* who will vacate the bath on rude interruption and wait in the Indian Pride over that particular bath, chattering like pixie children imitating a motorcycle, until they can continue with their 'wash 'n brush up' .... until the next interruption. There are opportunists like the common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*, our own special race of the Streaky Seed-eater *Serinus striolatus whytii*, the local race of the Thick-billed Seed-eater *S. burtoni melanochrous* and the Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* who, being sloppy, untidy, messy bathers, splash into the nearest bath regardless of whether or not it is already occupied. If it necessary to share, they demand most of the room which sometimes results in the retreat, noisy or

discreet of the previous occupant. As always in life there are the hangers on, although I guess mine are much prettier than most, like the Eastern Double-collared Sunbird *Nectarinia mediocris* who will wait in the bushes for one of these 'singing in the bath' types and then flutter round the bath showering in the resulting spray.

Surprise number three. All over the world bathers will be bathers, come rain come shine they go in regardless. Even when we are in the depths of our 'winter' (at 8° 36' S. and 1900 metres a.s.l. we get some pretty parky weather) my avian bathers behave in the same way, using the baths constantly, rather reminiscent of Brighton Beach at New Year.

Surprise number four. The baths are not only baths but 'pubs'. Like all good pubs I have my regulars, Pied Crows *Corvus albus*, White-necked Ravens *C. albicollis* and African Pied Wagtails *Motacilla aguimp* amongst others. I also have my casuals who drop in from time to time; on their irregular visits they are to be found in the 'Private Bar' or 'Snug' - the quiet, shady secluded ones. Among these are to be found the Spot-throat *Modulatrix stictigula*, and our own Iringa Ground Robin *Dryocichloides lowei*, Shelley's Greenbul *Andropardus masukuensis*, the Mountain Greenbul *A. tephrolaemus*, and the Olive-flanked Ground Robin *D. anomalus* and the Northern Olive Thrush *Turdus abyssinicus*. These customers are the unobtrusive sort, quick, quiet slip in, a 'quicky' in the corner, then a quick quiet slip away. Perhaps my greatest fun is in my 'tourist' and 'tripper' trade; annual visitors like the Garden Warblers *Sylvia borin*, the Blackcaps *S. atricapilla*, the Willow Warblers *Phylloscopus trochilus* are among these 'must get away for the winter' European types. They stick around on a fairly regular basis for a few months, as do some of the intra-African migrants 'can't stand the weather at home'; chappies like the Malachite Sunbird *N. famosa*, the Violet-backed Starlings *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* and those polite bubbling African Firefinches who are never around too long in case they outstay their welcome. There are no signs up round my 'pub' so I get the occasional 'coach load' of noisy trippers who move in and take over a particular 'bar' for a session. Some of these are 'Specials' - Waller's Chestnut-winged Starling *Onychognathus walleri* together with their slimmer associates Kenrick's Starling *Poeoptera kenricki*, both of whom have arboreal habits, keeping to the tops of high forest trees or so my books tell me ! The Yellow-crowned Canary *S. canicollis*, the African Citrils *S. citrinelloides* and the Red-faced Crimson-wings *Cryptospiza reichenowi* are coachload customers, waiting and gossiping around until everyone has had a 'jar' and 'One for the road' before leaving as noisily as they arrived. My 'pub', 'bars' and 'baths' have their delinquents too. Those loud louts who sit on the side lines shouting rude remarks but who skulk away at the slightest sign of anyone taking them seriously; the Stripe-cheeked Greenbul *A. milanjensis*, Fülleborn's Black Boubou *Laniarius fuelleborni* and that distinctive southern representative of the Cisticola family, *Cisticola chubbi nigriloris* to name but a few.

Surprise number five which should be no surprise - I have got something reminiscent of the 'Hells Angels', African Goshawks *Accipiter tachiro*, Mountain Buzzards *Buteo tachardus* and Long-crested Eagles *Lophaetus occipitalis*. When their menacing shadows swoop over my territory all the chattering and bathing stops as everyone dashes for cover.

Oh how they love to surprise - my 'Bird Bath Surprises !!

M. Beakbane, Brooke Bond (T), Box 40 Mufindi, Tanzania

A RARE CHAMAELEON ?

It would be interesting to know how common the Pygmy Chamaeleon *Brookesia ionidesi* is, and its distribution.

Recently my husband found one crossing the road on the edge of our very overgrown residential area, in Mbeya, S.W. Tanzania (altitude approximately 1 700 m).

It was a small chamaelon, about 5 cm long including its short pointed tail. We kept it for a few days before returning it to rhe wild, in a box with damp soil and grass, where it seemed to be quite happy and active feeding on small beetles. It changed colour from a light reddish tan to dark brown. When disturbed, it humped up its back and puffed itself out, looking very like a dead leaf or a lump of soil.

We had only seen one before, many years ago, brought in from the bush near Nachingwea, S.E. Tanzania.

Is it really rare or is it just so small and well-comouflaged that it goes unnoticed?

R.A. Nicholson, Box 259, Mbeya, Tanzania.

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VERREAUX'S EAGLES

Observed on Donyo Sabuk National Park, during November, 1982 were a pair of Verreaux's Eagles *Aquila verreauxii*. There was not time on the first sighting to investigate the nest closely, nor to determine if there was a chick in it, but it was possible to see that the nest was new.

I would be grateful if anyone could inform me of any previous sighting of Verreaux's Eagles nesting on Donyo Sabuk.

F.A. Davey, Box 365, Thika.

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HAMMERKOPS

With reference to the note in the November/December 1982 issue of the *Bulletin* on "Hammerkops Mating" by P. Soorae, the activities described are common in this species, *Scopus umbretta*. The activity referred to is that of one bird standing on the back of a second, normally accompanied by loud calling in duet. Such false mounting can occur at any time of the year and is apparently indiscriminate with males mounting other males as well as females, and females similarly mounting both sexes. This action is commonly performed amongst groups of Hammerkops, where more than one individual may attempt false mounting producing at times structures composed of three or four birds, which may even face in opposite directions. True courtship, whilst similar, is normally performed either on or close to the nest. Courtship in these birds is well described in *The Birds of Africa* Vol. 1 (Brown *et al.*, 1982).

Ken Campbell, Box 14469, Nairobi.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

I was interested to read Judith Rudnai's account of the Easter (1982) week-end camp at Maralal and the many birds observed in the area, with special reference to the Violet-backed Starling. In my youth this bird used to be called the 'Plum-coloured Staling' *Cinnyricinclus verreauxi*, as Robert's *Birds of South Africa* was our only reference then. Is it in fact the same bird?

I have every sympathy with Mrs Rudnai in her desire to have the Violet-backed Starling renamed. However, I feel that this bird comes out on top compared with the hapless 'Brown Parrot'. What an insipid, mundane (not to mention incorrect) name for this striking, multi-hued bird!

Mrs Rudnai further states that the renaming of birds seems to be very much in vogue recently. If this is indeed the case then I feel strongly that it should be undertaken with as much scientific detail and authority as any other branch of ornithology (i.e. ringing, breeding records, bird atlas, etc.). A casual approach can only lead to further confusion, so to avoid this, a name should not be changed without the consent of a panel of expert ornithologists.

It confounds me how so many birds acquired their English names in the first place, as so frequently they are wildly inappropriate.

C. Orme-Smith, P.O. Rongai.

This is indeed the same bird *C. leucogaster*. The panel of the Ornithological sub-Committee of the Society who produced *Birds of East Africa* spent many hours considering the subject of English nomenclature. Changes to accepted Mackworth-Praed & Grant names were introduced conservatively. Undoubtedly there still remain many species for which far more suitable and descriptively accurate English names could be found.

Ed.

Sir,

I wonder if it usual for squirrels to be addicted to honey? Near my verandah there is a *Ruttya* in full bloom with its long sprays a mass of yellow flowers.

It is always full of sunbirds but also, to my great surprise, it is daily frequented by a pair of squirrels who work from branch to branch licking the 'honey' from the flower centres.

In the many years that I have had this shrub I have never witnessed this before.

It would be interesting to know if honey forms a normal part of a squirrel's diet.

Daphne Sheppard, Box 24360, Karen.

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THE BULLETIN

This issue of the *Bulletin* covers the period January - April. Further issues later in the year will appear normally i.e. bi-monthly.

Members should note that this is the last issue they will receive unless their subscriptions are renewed.

REVIEW

RUN RHINO RUN by Esmond and Chrysee Bradley Martin: pictures by Mohamed Amin
Chatto & Windus 1982. Pp. 136. £9.95 sterling

During the 1970s, in ten years, 50 per cent of the world's rhinoceros population disappeared. During this period, in eastern Africa, nine out of ten were slaughtered, mostly by poachers.

Man, the world's most dangerous and acquisitive animal, wants rhino. He wants it dead and he wants its horns. He is not likely to be influenced by the fact that the rhino has been on this earth for the last sixty million years and that the last five remaining species out of thirty are in danger of being wiped out completely. Or is he? Is education and persuasion the answer?

Amongst those fighting the battle of the decimation of the remaining rhino are the Bradley Martins. Dr Martin, assisted by grants from the World Wildlife Fund and the IUCN has travelled widely in his quest for facts for the fascinating book *Run Rhino Run*. Some of the truths that emerge are startling. We all knew, did we not, that the main bulk of all rhino horn was sold to the Chinese for love-potions? This is not so. There is no evidence that it was ever used for this purpose in China. By the Gujeratis and allied groups in northern India, it is indeed used as an aphrodisiac. But, this does not account for the huge quantities taken out of the rhino habitat countries. It seems that North Yemen imports three times as much horn as any other country and will pay the highest prices. A Yemeni will not be seen without his dagger and although a few dagger handles are made of cow horn the vast majority are fashioned from rhino horn; prestige for the Yemeni, death for the second largest mammal in the world. One dagger can cost as much as 12 000 dollars, Dr Martin tells us.

A great deal of original research and thought has gone into the compilation of *Run Rhino Run*; on the rhino there is no other book like it and its importance to conservation is obvious. The fine pictures by Mohamed Amin reinforce the drama of the subject and do much to drive home the cruelty and horror surrounding a shameful trade.

The quality of the writing; the expertise employed by the authors in what to say and how to present a vast amount of new information lifts this book right out of the realms of report making and into the compulsive reading class. Those Society members who are unable to get a copy for themselves will find *Run Rhino Run* in the library at the National Museum.

Jean Hayes, Crescent Island, Box 670, Naivasha.

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ROBERT HERBERT CARCASSON AN APPRECIATION

Robert Carcasson was born on the 5th December 1918, in Cheltenham, and was educated in England and Italy. At the University of Florence's School of Tropical Agriculture (1935 to 1937) he obtained a diploma in tropical agriculture. In those same years he was fortunate in having the chance to learn the principles and methods of taxonomy from Roger Verity who at that time was compiling his monumental work on Italian butterflies.

With oral and written fluency in English, Italian and French, and a working knowledge of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin, the young man travelled in Africa and South East Asia between 1937 and 1939. In this period he studied zoology and worked in agriculture. With the commencement of World War 2 he

joined up, and saw action with the Rhodesian forces in Armoured Cars and Anti-Tank Artillery through East Africa, Ethiopia, Somalia, North Africa and Italy. Demobbed in 1946 he turned to pioneer farming on his own account in Rhodesia, which he did until 1955. In 1956 he returned to more academic pursuits and accepted the post of senior Entomologist with Nairobi's Coryndon Museum. In 1961 he became the Museum's Director, combining this work with that of Senior Entomologist until 1968. During this period he worked towards, and was granted, a Ph.D by the university of East Africa for his studies on African Hawkmoths. He also added fluency in Kiswahili to his linguistic accomplishments. In 1969 he became Chief Curator of the Centennial Museum, Vancouver, Canada. In 1971 he relinquished this post and travelled to Trinidad, Guyana and Brazil. In 1972 he travelled in Polynesia, Melanesia, Australia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Seychelles and East Africa in connection with the production of *A Field Guide to Indo-Pacific Reef Fishes*. Between 1973 and 1979 he was Curator of Entomology at the Museum of British Columbia.

From 1957 until 1980 he produced a more or less continuous stream of scientific papers. These ranged from records of new butterflies, through broad philosophical appreciations of the role of Natural History Museums in Tropical Africa to the beautifully illustrated book on Indo-Pacific Reef Fishes referred to above. Latterly he saw as the culmination of his work the publication (now in active preparation) of his *Synonymic Catalogue of the African Butterflies* by the British Museum. The *curriculum vitae* closes with his death from cancer in Victoria, B.C., Canada on the 28th September 1982.

Although the above record is that of a remarkable man, it covers but a small part of his achievements and many abilities. His thinking on Africa's zoogeography influenced many and, in this field, he was entomology's counterpart to Ornithology's Reg Moreau. While he was most widely known for his work with Lepidoptera, he was also an authority on coral reef fishes. But art was his field too, and the record he left in his acrylic illustrations of butterflies, and fishes ranks him high among artists. As is so often the case with big men, his interests went far beyond those of his livelihood. Renaissance and Baroque music fascinated him and he never lost his love of farming. However, for all that he was an academic heavy-weight, the enduring memory of those who knew Bob Carcasson is of a warm personality with a keen sense of humour. In its simple and most complete sense, Bob was a thoroughly decent fellow. Our deepest sympathies go out to his wife Bee and his son Francis. For all that Bob did not quite attain his three score and ten, he led a full life, he enjoyed it, and he extended human knowledge substantially enough to have a niche among the "greats" of Africa's natural historians. His memory is one of which to be proud.

Ian Parker.

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NOTICE TO ANYONE INTERESTED IN BIRDS:

are you a birdwatcher/photographer/ringer newly arrived in Kenya, and in search of details of local birds, good areas to visit, relevant literature and ringing and other research schemes? Contact Adrian D. Lewis (Geology Box 30197, Nairobi for information.

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A WALKING SAFARI ALONG THE TSAVO RIVER

IN TSAVO WEST NATIONAL PARK

A volunteer is worth ten pressed men, they say, but if the volunteer is writing a report on an EANHS safari, he is a new member on his first field trip with them, and, furthermore, can't tell one plant from another or recognise geological formations when he trips over them - aren't the results likely to be a bit disastrous? Read on, and find out. My thanks to Joan and Tom Grumbley for their notes, and to Lise Campbell, who has promised to correct any horrible errors (someone has to share the blame).

Sixteen members gathered at the Campbell's house on Saturday morning 23rd. October 1982. Transport was a little late, but we were on our way only an hour behind schedule. A picnic lunch was due en route, but for some reason it was put off until we arrived at the first camp on the Tsavo River. We were all rather hungry - by this time it was 3.00 p.m., and the lack of dedicated wildlife spotting during the journey through Tsavo West may have been because we spent more time keeping an eye on the 'lunch truck' than on anything else!

However, we did manage to take note of a White-headed Vulture *Trigonoceps occipitalis*, a small flock of Golden-breasted Starlings *Cosmopsarus regius*, and a white-plumaged Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* amongst others. A small herd of Elephant *Loxodonta africana* was seen shortly after entering by the Mtito Andei gate and a number of Masai Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis* including young were passed. Yellow Baboon *Papio cynocephalus* were much in evidence throughout the five days of the trip.

During the course of the five day safari a total of 109 species of birds were positively identified, mostly by sight, but a few by call only. Various species which might be of interest are mentioned in this account, but I have compiled a complete list of all species on a separate sheet, this is deposited in the Society Office for the benefit of anyone interested.

As the weather looked like rain, the first campsite had been missed out for fear of a flash flood, and we therefore spent two nights at the second site, SW of Tembo peak, to which I will refer as camp 2. All the campsites were in beautiful settings, surrounded by Vegetable Ivory Palms *Hyphaene crinita* and surprisingly insect-free (or at least mosquito-free!). The views in any direction were superb, and the sunrises and sunsets were enjoyed by all. Close to camp 2 the tree *Craibia brevicauda* was in full flower.

During this first afternoon and evening, Verreaux'z Eagle *Aquila verreauxii* were reported by some members and two Kingfishers, the Chestnut-bellied *Halcyon leucocephalus* and the Pygmy *Ispidina picta* were seen in a tree overhanging the river. Fine specimens of *Delonix elata* in flower were admired by those who knew what they were called, and by those who did not.

The more serious walking took place between 6.30 a.m. and 12 noon each day, followed by a large lunch, cold beer, a siesta, tea and an optional evening walk before dinner. It must be said that the food was excellent and consumed with large appetites - the cook worked wonders over his camp fire to produce home-baked bread, roast chicken, fish and chip suppers and other delights! Sitting round the fire after dinner watching fireflies and feeling quite contented was a favourite occupation.

We were split into two groups of eight for the morning walks, each group escorted by two armed rangers. The rangers were used to leading groups of tourists in search of mammals large and small (preferably large), and were somewhat puzzled by the end of the first day by this strange group who kept looking at birds, peering at plants and inspecting bits of rock! However, the tour company leader, Rob Flowers, explained to them that we were really quite harmless, if a little different from the average customer, and a reasonable understanding was arrived at.

The Tsavo River was in full flow and a rather muddy red-brown colour. We were warned on the first evening to stay away from the water's edge, because the river is infested with hippo and crocodile. We were then told that each morning we would be wading across the river before starting our walks on the opposite bank. These two bits of information seemed somewhat contradictory, but as it happened we did not brave the river crossing until the fourth and fifth days, as the level of the river was considered too high initially. All the campsites were on the north bank, so if you crossed the river in the morning you had to cross back again to get some lunch!

For ease of reference, I shall refer to my walking group as group 1, and the other eight members as group 2. On the morning of the second day, group 1 were driven back to where our first camp should have been, and walked the 5 km back to camp 2. During this first walk, we were shown several groups of Hippopotomus *Hippopotamus amphibius* submerged in the river, some groups being eight or nine strong; one baby hippo was seen and we stayed well clear of mother. Five crocodiles were also found, three just showing their snouts above water and two basking out in the sun. .

The eyesight of the rangers never ceased to amaze us. A Lesser Kudu *Strepsiceros imberbis* was spotted some distance away, and a Common Waterbuck *Kobus ellipsiprymnus* was found, standing stock still and merging completely with the background. The pace of this first morning's walk was fairly rapid, and little time was found to stop and identify birds. The more experienced bird spotters were in group 2, so we did our best with Williams in one hand and a notebook in the other. However, we did find various species, amongst which were d'Arnaud's Barbet *Trachyphonus darnaudii*, Water Thicknee *Burhinus vermiculatus*, and Scops Owl *Otus scops*.

Meanwhile, group 2 had been following a 3 km route around Kichwa Tembo visiting an old First World War fort en route, near which they came across an interesting Amorphallus in flower. At one point, overlooking the river they watched a small crocodile on a mudflat attempting to eat a dove (unidentified!). Birds seen included the African Golden Oriole *Oriolus auratus* and an excellent view of a Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus* perched in a tree.

After lunch and a suitable rest, the evening walkers headed up the slopes leading towards Tembo Peak. Those of us with slightly stiff muscles enjoyed a quick nap in the shade, and spent the evening resting on the river bank, quietly bird spotting (is there any other way?). These efforts were rewarded by Crimson-rumped Waxbills *Estrilda rhodopyga* and the black-bellied race of the Beautiful Sunbird *Nectarinia pulchella*. At the end of the day we retired to our tents to the sound of Spotted Hyaena in the distance.

Day three dawned bright and sunny, in fact, apart from the first day, when it rained during the drive through the park, we enjoyed hot and sunny weather throughout the trip. Group 2 reversed the walk done by group 1 the previous day, walking from camp 2 back to the site of camp 1. Group 1 set off to repeat group 2's first walk, including the visit to the old fort, where we were regaled with stories of the defence of the Tsavo bridge, which the Germans succeeded in blowing up twice, and where more soldiers died from tropical diseases than ever did through combat.

The countryside was slightly more open bush country than the day before. Black-eyed Susan *Thunbergia alata* and wild lilies were in great profusion, and wonderful 'herby' smells, reminding one of mint, arose from underfoot. During one rest halt, in fact at the same spot where group 2 had seen their crocodile and dove, we saw a Black-faced Vervet Monkey *Cercopithecus aethiops* take a flying leap into the river; it proceeded in a series of bounds across the river, while a loud splash heralded the presence of a large crocodile. It thrashed across the surface, making frantic-looking lunges in the direction of the monkey, who made the crossing in safety. The behaviour of the crocodile was unusual in staying on the surface, instead of swimming under

water. Any explanation for this action?

Birds seen during the morning included a Red and Yellow Barbet *T. erythrocephalus*; three Starlings - the Red-winged *Onychognathus morio*, Wattled *Creatophora cinerea* and the Golden-breasted; a Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* was seen flying overhead. Three Dwarf Mongooses *Helogale undulata* were flushed from cover almost at our feet, and two groups of elephants were spotted in the distance. Impala *Aepyceros melampus* were also present.

After lunch and siesta a large group of 14 set off to walk up a gully which carries a stream from a sulphur hot spring. In a pool under a cave-like opening, we found a catfish and Rob Flowers reported that he had seen Snapping Terrapins in this pool previously. Birdlife in the gully was abundant and we noted a Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*; two V-formations of White Storks *C. ciconia* gliding overhead without a movement of wings; a flock of male and female Orange-bellied Parrots *Poicephalus rufiventris*; male and female Von der Decken's Hornbill *Tockus deckeni*; and two White-bellied Go-away Birds *Corythaixoides leucogaster*.

Back at the campsite a Brown-hooded Kingfisher *H. albiventris* was seen on the far bank. During the night lions were heard roaring in the distance.

On day 4 group 2 were driven to Tsavo Gate and walked along the south bank of the river back to camp 4, while group 1 waded the river and walked the 6 km downstream to the camp. The day proved more eventful for mammals rather than for birds, although a pair of the locally common Black-faced Sandgrouse *Pterocles decoratus* were seen, and a Verreaux's Eagle Owl *Bubo lacteus* was spotted perched in a tree. Both groups came across a Hippopotamus standing out of the water at fairly close quarters, and group 2 found the first African Buffalo *Syncerus caffer* to be encountered on the trip. Group 1 saw another Lesser Kudu, and a Kirk's Dikdik *Rhynchotragus kirkii*.

Camp 4 was notable for the occupied nest of a Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus* in a palm tree above the 'dining area'. Nest building activity was also observed from a pair of African Pied Wagtails *Motacilla aguimp*. For our evening walk we were driven to the base of a nearby hill, called Kinyieki Rock and walked to the top, from where magnificent views were obtained. Your reporter's ignorance of matters geological was revealed when he was puzzled as to why everyone kept referring to how 'nice' everything was. In actual fact it was the geological 'gneiss' that was being referred to, and Kinyieki Rock was a 'gneiss' example! On the way up the hill, three lions had been noticed lying out on a bare rock below, so we set off later intending to try to see them at closer quarters. We did not get close, but when we were about half-way down, we saw at least seven lions (some said nine) spreading out below us, in apparent pursuit of either a Waterbuck or a Kongoni *Alcelaphus buselaphus*, both of which could be seen in the area. We were unable to see the result of the stalking, as the animals all disappeared into thick bush after a few minutes.

The night spent at camp 4 proved to be somewhat sleepless for some, as a ground tremor was felt at 1.15 a.m. followed by two or three smaller tremors. Various sensible, and not so sensible, suggestions were bandied about as to the cause of the tremors, including ghosts of Germans blowing up the Tsavo Bridge, but the generally accepted theory was that of a minor earthquake. My own personal opinion probably would not help at all, as I slept soundly through the night and did not notice a thing! However, as shooting stars had been noticed during the previous two nights, my wife thought it was a meteorite landing. Personally, I think that Gilbert Vanderstickelen dropped his torch...

For the last day's walk, group 2 crossed the river and walked back to camp 3 where a vehicle awaited, while group 1 repeated group 2's previous day's walk from Tsavo Gate back to camp 4. Group 1 found White Pelicans *Pelecanus onocrotalus* roosting in a tree early in the morning, and Hunter's

Sunbird *N. hunteri* later in the day. Pairs of Egyptian Geese *Alopochen aegyptiacus* had been noisily in evidence on all sections of the river, and we disturbed an adult with four goslings on the southern bank on this final morning. They all plunged into the river and swam to the far side, where the adult and three of the young scrambled up the bank. The fourth gosling made several efforts to get out of the water before finally achieving dry land to the accompaniment of spontaneous applause from the human observers!

Desert Rose *Adenium obesum* were noticed during this final morning, and a scent like parma violets occasionally drifted up. Just before reaching camp 4, a Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephalus* flew up from the river, and a Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* perched on top of a thorn bush. Two Buffalo were seen and four Zebra *Equus burchelli* came down to the river edge.

Having completed the 3 km walk shortly after 10.00 a.m., we spent the rest of the morning on the bank or playing on the 'monkey swing' which had been set up over the river. Group 2 joined us in time for lunch, and fell upon the two remaining cold beers.

After lunch the campsite was packed away for the last time, and after a short drive to Tsavo Gate, we reluctantly headed for the strange-seeming trappings of urban life once more. A splendid five days for all concerned, and a memorable first EANHS trip for myself and my wife. Our thanks to all concerned with the organisation and running of the safari and the camps - we shall certainly come again!

Peter Fletcher, Box 43675, Nairobi.

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INFORMAL OUTING TO THE TOP OF THE MUA HILLS

Thrusting any pretence at informality firmly aside, the outing of January 9, 1983 decided its destination in advance, had it bruited abroad, assembled on time and howled off, twenty strong, down the Mombasa road to foam like a breaking wave over the crest of the Mua Hills (1°27'S 37°11'E) on a brilliant, cloudless morning. So great was the overall momentum, buoyed up as it was by such a limitless feeling of well-being and sunshine, that the van of the column hurtled straight past the turn off, nearly making it the most informally arranged of trips to Machakos.

Leaving the main road and observing almost at once a half-grown brood of Shelley's Francolins (all bird names as in Britton's *Birds of East Africa*) we surged steadily up the very reasonable and gritty roads towards the tops of the hills. Farmland gave way to a copse and grassland mosaic, and a brief stop disclosed vast amounts of snow on the cap of Kilimanjaro, floating wraith-like above the clouds in the haze away to the south. Then up through 'shambas' and into more indigenous copse-grassland mosaic, with the low trees draped in the Spanish moss or lichen, or whatever, that gave even the most uninitiated botanist an idea of the altitude: we were just over 2 000 m.

Leaving the cars and taking onan almost instantaneously unnerving resemblance to a Wednesday morning birdwalk, we meandered down a shallow valley, taking a rather erratic course as different birds pulled us different ways, and also examining the abundant orchids in the trees, and other plants and insects. A blatant gastronome just missed ostracism by airing surprise at the apparent absence of myriad orchards and jam factories. A calling Red-fronted Tinker Bird was promptly whistled up to within close proximity of the party with an ease that surprised no one more than the whistler; Yvonne Malcolm-Coe drew the very useful distinction that whereas the Yellow-rumped Tinker Bird 'tinks' in groups of five or so with pauses between each group, the Red-fronted

sounds off almost interminably. Members expressed bewilderment over the distinction between the Yellow-breasted Apalis' galloping and the Grey-backed Camaroptera's sticky clicking, only to have both birds perform alternately right in front of them: a rare and unexpected treat.

Moving on down the valley and passing as we did so presumably wild geraniums, we at last arrived at two idyllic small dams, one with fringing water lilies in full bloom and the other with shady acacias. The bird list soared, yea even thermalled, as even this late in the morning there was activity continuing at this altitude: migrants from Eurasia included a Green Sandpiper and a Red-tailed Shrike. Afrotropical birds of note included several White-headed Roughwings near the eastern edges of their Kenya range, plus the fact that there only seemed to be one Cisticola, the Singing, in the area, in habitat that appeared ideal for the noisy and unmissable Rattling: this situation has been noted in this area previously and appears to be real, possibly being due to the fact that the altitude is just too high for the Rattling.

At the mention of lunch, something akin to the dash at the start of the Le Mans 24 hours went off back up the hill, leaving the more out of condition of us to complacently converse on mind over matter and the purity of our interests, while trying not to appear to be doing our best to catch the rest up.

A leisurely and congenial lunch was taken in the welcome shade of cars and bushes. Another short drive brought us over a rocky gorge, with the panorama opening out to Nairobi and the Aberdares to the north. A peculiar song was tracked down to a Yellow Warbler and, in the distance, it was just possible to discern the shimmering turgidity of Dandora sewage lagoons which, combined with the exhilarating altitude and the recently taken meal, provided a profound moment; with those of us of West Country extraction being irresistibly reminded of those moving lines from Arthur Smallney's "Visit to my cousin Alice at Nempnett Thrubwell" : "Sunday dinner's over and we'm walking by the byre, and oh the smells, forgotten tales, do set my soul afire": power to yer pencil stub, Art.

One of the great attractions of the trip had been the possibility of seeing the elusive Violet-crested Turaco but, save for two very distant and not altogether certain turaco calls, there was no trace of the birds. We were just about to leave, in fact just having a last desultory look in the lower copses, when a pair were spotted taking fruit from the topmost exposed branches of a tall tree: they flew off but were tracked, and everyone got good views, bringing the bird list to 58 species, and providing a very satisfying end to the trip, we left the hills at 3 p.m.

Adrian D. Lewis, Geology, Box 30197, Nairobi.

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REQUEST

The Director of The Devoman Botanic Garden at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, has written to me with a request for seed from the following ing plants:

Senecio brassica s.sp. *brassica* which is found on open moorland from 3 000 to 4 000 m .

Delphinium macrocentron (blue to torquoise)

Delphinium leroyi (white)

Lobelia keniensis confined to Mt. Kenya in wet and marshy ground above 3 000 m.

Gladiolus natalensis this is common everywhere but there is also a local variety in western Kenya with yellow - rather than orange to yellowish brown - flowers streaked with orange.

I should be grateful if any member of the Society who may be travelling or climbing during the next few months would collect for me seed of the above to meet the Director's request

Sir Micheal Blundell, Box 30181, Nairobi, Kenya.

NOTICES

The Society has been offered a repeat of last year's most successful walking tour in Tsavo (Tsavo River Foot Safari) at a special price of Sh.2.500/- per person. The normal price is Sh.3 750 /-. This special offer is for a party of no less than 12 persons and no more than 16. Prices include transport to and from Nairobi, all transport, guide and park fees, food and equipment. If any member is interested, please write to Mrs A.L. Campbell, Box 14469, Nairobi as soon as possible in order that a firm booking can be arranged, suggested dates being September 3rd to 7th, 1983.

BUSHWHACKERS SAFARI CAMP. Jane Stanton wishes fellow members to know that Buswhackers Safari Camp is still open to visitors despite rumours to the contrary. There are night and day guards and security is good. With the rains, flowers will be coming out and the birds are as numerous as ever. Bookings should be made by letter (as there is no telephone) to:
Mrs H.R. Stanton, Bushwhackers, Box 33, Kibwezi.

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WANTED

Tent to sleep 4 - 5 people, also any other camping equipment. Please contact: Dr R. Davis, Dept. of Zoology, Kenyatta University College, Box 43844, Nairobi. Thank you.

By Nairobi School member:

1. Mini-Moke, used but reliable
2. Copies of 'old' Williams *Birds of East and Central Africa*.
3. Copies of 'old' Williams *Field Guide to the National Parks of E. Africa*.
4. Second-hand binoculars.

Please ring 48495 evenings.

SCOPUS 1978. Vol.2 Nos. 1,2,3, & 5. Would any member with spare copies of the above numbers, please contact E.H. Tucker, Box 90462, Mombasa, who would like to buy them.

FOR SALE

Binoculars 8 x 50 "Prinz"	... Sh.350/-
Camera, Zeiss Ikon in Leather Case including filter ...	... Sh.200/-
Enlarger with easel, 2 developing tanks and splicer ...	Offers please.
Two V.G. Badminton rackets, each with press ...	...Sh.350/- & 250/-

Five irons, 2 woods in Golf Bag Sh.2 500/-

Motor Mower Sh.450/-

Mrs Marjorie Watts, Box 30099, Nairobi.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

MONDAY 18th April, 1983: In the Museum Hall, Nairobi at 5.30 p.m. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING followed by film - about 25 mins. - Anglia Television Natural History Unit in the 'Survival' series "FAIR SHARES FOR ALL by Tony Bomford. about Cormorants and Fisheries on Lake Malawi - kindly loaned by Dr K C Dr K. Campbell.

SUNDAY 8th May, 1983: Mr & Mrs Dave Richards will lead a half or full day trip to the Ololua Forest. Please make your own way as follows: via Karen roundabout 2 km on road to Ngong, turn left on to Ololua Ridge road from where Mr Richards' house will be signposted a further 2 km from the turn-off. Cars can be parked at Mr Richards' house. Please come with lunch if you want to stay all day and be prepared for wet weather. TIME 9.30 a.m.

MONDAY 9th May, 1983: in the Museum Hall, Nairobi at 5.30 p.m.
Dr David Pearson will give an illustrated lecture on "AUTUMN MIGRATION ON THE SUDAN RED SEA COAST".

MONDAY 13th June, 1983: in the Museum Hall at 5.30 p.m.
Dr J.P. Darlington will give an illustrated lecture on "THE ECOLOGY OF MACROTERMES spp. IN SEMI-ARID GRASSLANDS".

FUTURE SOCIETY DATES:

For 20th, 21st and 22nd October we have reserved the Meru Mt. Kenya Self Service Lodge, which has just opened on the eastern slopes of Mt. Kenya at an altitude of 3 000m. This area and the forest below should be of tremendous interest for bird and plant enthusiasts and for mountain walking.

If you are interested in taking part in this trip please reserve these dates. The cost per person is Sh.130/- per night - everything provided, except food. There is room for a maximum of 28 people, depending on the size of individual parties. More details will be given in the next issue.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRD WALKS, led by Mrs Fleur N'gweno continue.
Please meet at the National Museum at 8.45 a.m. sharp.

The Ornithological Sub-Committee wishes to advise all members who do not normally receive *SCOPUS*, that the 1981 Annual Bird Report is now available from: D.A. Turner, box 48019, Nairobi.

Many members of the Society have in the past stayed with Roger and Lucy Mennell at Korongo Farm, Lake Naivasha, either camping or hiring the manager's house on a do-it-yourself basis or as paying guests in the big house. They will be glad to know that in spite of Roger's sudden death on 11th February, Lucy is going on taking guests in all three categories at til least until the end of 1983. Members who stayed there at Easter found everything satisfactory except for Roger's absence.
ADDRESS: Box 28, Naivasha. PHONE: Naivasha 56Y10.

THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the Joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the **EANHS Bulletin** every two months; a copy of each **Journal** published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers and runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes **The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.** Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated magazine issued six times a year, which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to The Editor **(EANHS Bulletin),** Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawing will be considered if they add to the value of the article. Photographs cannot be published.

SCOPUS

The Ornithological Sub Committee publishes this quartely bird magazine. Cost: EANHS members KShs. 75/= p.a. All correspondence to D.A. Turner, Box 48019, Nairobi, Kenya.

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